

if the cases are examined it will be found that when he had success it was because he took up something for which the mores were ready. Wilberforce did not overthrow slavery.

Natural forces reduced to the service of man and the discovery of new land set men "free" from great labor, and new ways suggested new sentiments of humanity and ethics. The mores changed and all the wider deductions in them were repugnant to slavery. The free-trade agitators did not abolish the corn laws. The interests of the English population had undergone a new distribution. It was the redistribution of population and political power in the United States which made the civil war. Witchcraft and trial by torture were not abolished by argument. Critical knowledge and thirst for reality made them absurd. In Queen Anne's reign prisons in England were frightful sinks of vice, misery, disease, and cruel extortion. " So the prisons continued until the time of Howard,"¹ seventy-five years later. The mores had then become humanitarian. Howard was able to get a response.

118. Capricious interest of the masses. Whether the masses will think certain things wrong, cruel, base, unjust, and disgusting ; whether they will think certain pleas and demands reasonable; whether they will regard certain projects as sensible, ridiculous, or fantastic, and will give attention to certain topics, depends on the convictions and feelings which at the time are dominant in the mores. No one can predict with confidence what the response will be to any stimulus which may be applied. The fact that certain American products of protected industries are sold abroad cheaper than at home, so that the protective

tariff taxes us to make presents to foreigners, has been published scores of times. It might be expected to produce a storm of popular indignation. It does not do so. The abuses of the pension system have been exposed again and again. There is no popular response in condemnation of the abuse, or demand for reform. The error and folly of protection have been very fully exposed, but the free-trade agitation has not won ground. In truth, however, that agitation has never been carried on sincerely

¹ Ashton, *Social Life in the Time of Queen Anne*[^]
Chap. XLI.